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1. A midplane, comprising:  
a printed circuit board;  
a first communication coupling coupled with the  
5 printed circuit board and configured to receive a first  
computing device;  
a second communication coupling coupled with the  
printed circuit board and configured to receive a second  
computing device;  
10 a master signal control module coupled with the  
first and second communication couplings;  
wherein the master signal control module is operable  
to communicate control signals to the second  
communication coupling if the first computing device is  
15 not coupled with the first communication coupling; and  
wherein the master signal control module prevents  
communication of the control signals to the second  
communication coupling if the first computing device is  
not coupled with the first communication coupling.  
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2. The midplane of Claim 1, wherein the first  
communication coupling includes trace wiring at least  
partially embedded within the printed circuit board.
- 25 3. The midplane of Claim 1, wherein the first  
computing device comprises a server processing card.
4. The midplane of Claim 1, wherein the second  
computing device is coupled with a network interface card  
30 operable to couple the first computing device with a  
network.

5        5.    The midplane of Claim 1, wherein the master  
signal control module is operable to communicate the  
control signals to the first communication coupling if  
the first computing device is coupled with the first  
communication coupling.

10       6.    The midplane of Claim 1, further comprising:  
a third communication coupling coupled with the  
printed circuit board and configured to receive a third  
computing device; and

15       wherein the master signal control module is operable  
to communicate control signals to the third communication  
coupling if the first and second computing devices are  
not coupled with the first and second communication  
couplings, respectively.

20       7.    The midplane of Claim 1, wherein the master  
signal control module is operable to prevent  
communication of the control signals to the third  
communication coupling if the first computing device is  
coupled with the first communication coupling or the  
second computing device is coupled with the second  
communication coupling.

25       8.    The midplane of Claim 1, wherein the master  
signal control module comprises a plurality of diodes and  
resistors operable to perform logic which determines the  
path of the communication signals.

a midplane printed circuit board having first and second connectors configured to receive first and second server processing cards, respectively;

a master signal control module coupled with the midplane printed circuit board;

wherein the master signal control module is operable to prevent communication of the control signals to the first server processing card if the second server processing card is coupled with the second connector.

10. A method for controlling a plurality of hardware components, comprising:

monitoring first and second connectors coupled with a midplane to detect the presence of first and second  
5 computing devices, respectively;

transmitting master control signals to the second computing device if the first computing device is not coupled with the first connector; and

preventing the transmission of the master control  
10 signals to the second computing device if the first computing device is coupled with the first connector.

11. The method of Claim 10, further comprising transmitting the master control signals to the first  
15 computing device if the first computing device is coupled with the first connector.

12. The method of Claim 10, further comprising:

monitoring a third connector coupled with the  
20 midplane to detect the presence of a third computing device; and

transmitting the control signals to the third communication device if the first and second computing devices are not coupled with the first and second  
25 connectors, respectively.

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monitor first and second connector coupled with a  
midplane to detect the presence of first and second  
5 computing devices, respectively;

prevent the transmission of the master control  
10 signals to the second computing device if the first  
computing device is coupled with the first connector.

15. The computer readable medium of Claim 13,  
20 wherein the logic is further operable to:

transmit the control signals to the third communication device if the first and second computing devices are not coupled with the first and second connectors, respectively.

16. A system, comprising:

means for monitoring first and second connectors coupled with a midplane to detect the presence of first and second computing devices, respectively;

5 means for transmitting master control signals to the second computing device if the first computing device is not coupled with the first connector; and

means for preventing the transmission of the master control signals to the second computing device if the  
10 first computing device is coupled with the first connector.

17. The system of Claim 16, further comprising transmitting the master control signals to the first  
15 computing device if the first computing device is coupled with the first connector.

18. The system of Claim 16, further comprising:

monitoring a third connector coupled with the  
20 midplane to detect the presence of a third computing device; and

transmitting the control signals to the third communication device if the first and second computing devices are not coupled with the first and second  
25 connectors, respectively.

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